

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the outstanding Office Action dated April 20, 2004, a response having been extended, wherein the Examiner rejected pending claims 8-10, 12 and 14, but did indicate that claims 11, 13 and 15 would be allowable if re-written in appropriate independent form. This indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. Reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments made herein and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Action, the Examiner rejects pending claims 8-10, 12 and 14 as anticipated by the teaching in Japanese publication No. 10-70360. The Examiner argues that the Japanese publication teaches the design of a dip coating apparatus comprised of a nozzle having an outlet through which solder is flowed; the nozzle includes a member provided at the outlet of the nozzle that has a surface to be whetted by the solder. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended independent claims 8-9 in order to affirmatively recite that the component leads (which depend from a circuit board) are selectively movable between a raised and lowered condition for being dipped into the solder or solder surface. In other words, the component part or parts to be soldered in the dip soldering apparatus invention are selectively moved vertically down into the solder surface and subsequently removed vertically therefrom. This contrasts with the teaching of the Japanese publication, in which it is clear that the purpose of plate 6 of the Japanese system is to prevent warping of circuit board 2 during the soldering apparatus (see page 2 of the translation of the Japanese publication, a copy of which is attached hereto). Thus, the problem addressed by the Japanese publication is that a break or void can be formed in the solder surface at the location of plate 6 and that this problem or situation is solved by wetting the plate. Accordingly, plate 6 of the Japanese teaching performs a far different function than it was found in the claimed invention. In the Japanese publication, it serves simply to prevent bending of circuit board 2 and it is

whetted in order to insure that there is no void in the solder surface. In contrast, the claimed apparatus has the component leads move up and down into and out of the solder surface; in the Japanese publication, the circuit board leads to be soldered are passed laterally across the surface of the solder, again similar to a wave soldering process or system.

Accordingly, it is Applicant's position that the Japanese publication neither teaches nor suggests the apparatus recited in independent claims 8 and 9 as well as what is recited in the claims which depend therefrom.

Applicants note that new claims 16-35 are presented. Claims 16-19 depend from amended claim 8. Independent claim 20 is dependent claim 11 re-written in independent form; the Examiner considered this claim to be allowable. Similarly, independent claim 25 is claim 13 re-written in an independent form (without the recitation of the language in claim 12); the Examiner also indicated that claim 13 was directed to allowable subject matter.

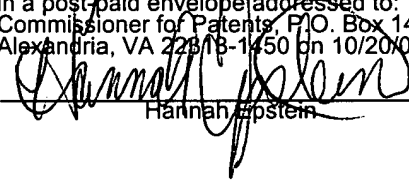
New claims 29 and 32 are similar to dependent claims 11 and 13 (considered allowable by the Examiner), except reciting the elements of claim 8. It is submitted that these two independent claims, as well as those claims which depend therefrom, are also directed to allowable subject matter.

Finally, new independent claim 35 is dependent claim 15 re-written in independent form; once again, the Examiner considered dependent claim 15 to be directed to allowable subject matter.

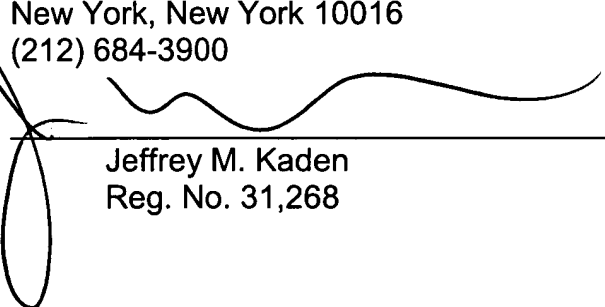
Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 8-35, all claims now pending in the application, are directed to allowable subject matter and it is requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued.

For the presentation of additional claims, including independent claims, a check in the amount of \$496 is also enclosed. Please charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1730.

Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

<p><u>CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37</u> <u>CFR §1.8</u></p> <p>I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service via First Class mail service in a post-paid envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on 10/20/04.</p> <p> _____ Hannah Epstein</p>
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Respectfully submitted,
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October 20, 2004

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